

10 Proven Probiotic Yogurt Benefits & Nutrition Facts



Traditional probiotic yogurt is made from dairy that's fermented into a creamy food packed with beneficial **probiotics** and is a *balanced source* of protein, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. Yogurt is considered a **superfood**. When it's sourced from grass-fed cows or goats, then

yogurt's nutrition is maximized, supplying **omega-3 fatty acids**, **whey protein**, calcium, magnesium, potassium, vitamin D, vitamin K2, enzymes and probiotics.

Dairy-based yogurt can be made from goat's milk or sheep's milk, but traditional cow's milk is still the most popular. Also, yogurt is the most consumed fermented dairy product in the United States today, with the second being **kefir**.

It's believed that the fermenting of dairy milk dates back over 6,000 years to Central Asia as a way to preserve milk. Historical records place yogurt in India, Persia and Turkey not long after it was seen in Central Asia.

Yogurt was prized for its creamy texture and multitude of uses. Back then, fresh milk was often carried in the stomach linings of animals, where many believe the healthy bacteria, along with the climate, contributed to the fermentation.

[See all the probiotic benefits of yogurt here.](#)

Today, however, the process is much different! Dairy milks are heated to the point of killing the existing bacteria, a process known as **pasteurization**. A starter culture of live bacteria is introduced, and the milk is allowed to ferment for several hours, until it is thick, rich and tart.

10 Proven Probiotic Yogurt Benefits

So why is probiotic yogurt so good for you? In a study published in *Nutrition Research*, 6526 individuals were studied, and **yogurt intake was *directly associated* with better overall diet quality, healthier metabolic profiles, healthier blood pressure and triglyceride levels.** In

addition, yogurt was found to be an excellent source of calcium, potassium, magnesium, zinc, and **vitamins B2** and B12. (1) Yogurt is great for overall health and wellness, and **probiotic-rich foods** are central to the **GAPS Diet Plan**. Here are 10 proven yogurt health benefits:

1. Supports Healthy Digestion

Healthy bacteria that are added to yogurt help to improve the microflora in the gut, which is responsible for digestion and a healthy digestive tract. These active cultures may help with certain gastrointestinal conditions, including colon cancer, IBS, constipation, diarrhea and lactose intolerance. (2)

Many individuals that struggle with lactose intolerance find that yogurt is a soothing food, not one that causes digestive distress.



2. Lowers the Risk of Type 2 Diabetes

In a recent study, higher intake of probiotic yogurt is directly associated with a reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes. (3) Yogurt supports digestion and the absorption of nutrients throughout the digestive tract; this is essential for healthy blood sugar regulation.

3. Lowers the Risk of Colorectal Cancer

In a large study of over 45,000 individuals published in the *International Journal of Cancer*, yogurt consumption was shown to protect against colorectal cancer. Researchers indicated “the protective effect of yogurt was evident in the entire cohort”. (4) The reason for this is a healthier digestive tract, due to the probiotics and healthy bacteria in yogurt.



4. Increases Bone Density & May Help Prevent Osteoporosis

According to Jeri Nieves, Ph.D, MS and director of the Bone Density Testing Helen Hayes Hospital in New York, *“Adequate nutrition plays a major role in the prevention and treatment of osteoporosis, and the micronutrients of the greatest importance are calcium and vitamin D. The combination of*

calcium and vitamin D has a clear skeletal benefit, provided the dose of vitamin D is sufficiently high.” Dairy yogurts are **high in calcium**, and many dairy yogurts are fortified with **vitamin D**, however raw cow’s milk yogurt doesn’t need fortification as it contains 38IU per quart!

5. Supports Weight Loss and Increases Fat Loss

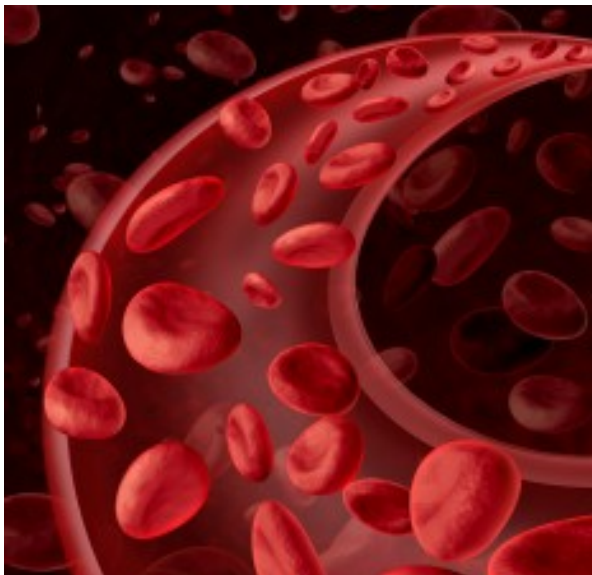
According to the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, yogurt increases fat loss.

The study showed that three- to six-ounce servings a day for 12 weeks nearly doubled the amount of fat lost versus others in the study. The group that consumed the probiotic yogurt and additional calcium to reach 1,100 milligrams lost 22 percent more weight and 61 percent more body fat. The study also found the belly region and the waist circumference were particularly affected. (5)



6. Boosts the Immune System

In a recent study, researchers found that probiotics found in yogurt and other fermented milk products can improve the gut mucosal immune system by increasing cytokine producing cells in the intestine. Researchers stated that “Supplementation of probiotic organisms in infancy could help prevent immune-mediated diseases in childhood.” (6) Another study on infants found that probiotics added to formulas had a significant decrease of number days with fever, antibiotic prescriptions, clinic visits and child care absences. (7) For adults, yogurt’s probiotics help to keep the digestive tract free of disease-causing bacteria. A randomized and placebo controlled study in Sweden of shift workers found that the placebo group reported more than twice the number of sick days than those who were taking probiotics. (8)



7. Reduces High Blood Pressure

Yogurt has over 600 milligrams of **potassium** per eight ounces! In 36 clinical trials and 17 studies, potassium intake and blood pressure reduction are evident. (9) The potassium is believed to help decrease sodium reabsorption, while influencing nervous system cell function important in lowering blood pressure and improving heart health. A study from

Harvard School of Public Health led by Alvaro Alonso, MD, Ph.D, found that people that eat two to three servings (or more) per day of low-fat dairy experience a 50 percent reduction in the risk of developing high blood pressure. So, if you have high blood pressure, start eating yogurt, and if you want to keep a healthy blood pressure, eat yogurt.

8. Reduces Bad Cholesterol

The live probiotics in yogurt, including *Lactobacillus Acidophilus*, decrease cholesterol levels, with just one 200-milliliter (seven ounces) serving per day! In a controlled clinical study, researchers witnessed a 2.4 percent reduction in serum cholesterol. They believe that regular intake of probiotic yogurt has the potential of reducing the risk for coronary heart disease by 6 percent to 10 percent. (10).



9. Regulates Moods

The effects of probiotics on the digestive tract and blood sugar levels have already been discussed, but as it turns out, **the health of our gut** *is directly related to our mood*. In a study from UCLA's Gail and Gerald Oppenheimer Family Center for Neurobiology of Stress that studied brain scans during and after the study,

researchers found healthy women who regularly consumed probiotics through yogurt showed more control in emotions and less anxiety when introduced to emotional events. (11) The group that consumed yogurt ate two servings per day for four weeks.

10. May Help Treat Chronic Pain & Brain-Related Illnesses

In the same study mentioned above regarding mood regulation, researchers noted that probiotics have the potential to help with chronic pain, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and autism. (11) Researchers also raised the question of whether repeated courses of antibiotics can affect the brain. Antibiotics are prescribed to kill the dangerous bacteria but also kill the healthy bacteria that reside in our guts. This reinforces my recommendation that yogurt and other probiotic-rich foods should always be consumed and especially taken after courses of **antibiotics**.

10

PROVEN

YOGURT

BENEFITS



1

SUPPORTS HEALTHY
DIGESTION



2

LOWERS THE RISK OF
TYPE 2 DIABETES



3

LOWERS THE RISK OF
COLORECTAL CANCER



4

HELPS **BONE DENSITY** &
PREVENT **OSTEOPOROSIS**



5

SUPPORTS **WEIGHT LOSS**
& INCREASES **FAT LOSS**



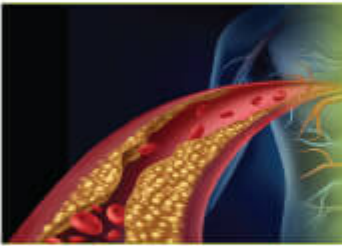
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BOOSTS THE **IMMUNE**
SYSTEM



7

REDUCES HIGH **BLOOD PRESSURE**



8

REDUCES BAD **CHOLESTEROL**



9

REGULATES **MOODS**



10

POTENTIAL TO HELP **CHRONIC PAIN & BRAIN**

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Yogurt Nutrition Facts

Protein, vitamin B12, pantothenic acid, potassium, zinc, riboflavin, calcium and phosphorus make up the nutrient profile of yogurt. It's a complete food, with just the right balance of protein, fat and carbohydrates. Just one serving can



provide over 25 percent of the daily value of protein and nearly 50 percent of the DV of calcium.

The essential fatty acid, Conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), is not produced by the body. Yogurt is a good source of CLA, which has been shown to reduce the risk for heart disease. It also helps reduce belly fat, negate chemically induced cancer, lowers cholesterol, increases metabolism and strengthens the immune system. (12)

Probiotics in yogurt stimulate healthy digestive function, and help produce vitamin B12 and K. Strains of healthy bacteria added to yogurt and kefir include Lactobacillus bulgaricus, Streptococcus thermophiles, Lactobacillus acidophilus, Lactobacillus casei and Bifidus. The key is to look for yogurt that contains “live and active cultures.”

Omega-3s are healthy fats associated with supporting weight loss, reducing blood pressure, decreasing inflammation, fighting cancer and protecting against cognitive decline. While we mostly focus on the omega-3s in wild-caught salmon and tuna, probiotic yogurt from grass-fed cows makes the list as one of the top food sources available. Dairy products, including yogurt, from grass-fed cows are richer in omega-3s and CLA.

YOGURT

NUTRITION FACTS

SERVING SIZE: 1 CUP (245 g)



PRINCIPLE

	NUTRIENT VALUE	PERCENT OF RDA
CALORIES	149 K cal	7%
PROTEIN	8.5 G	17%
TOTAL FAT	8.0 G	12%
SATURATED FAT	5.1 G	26%
OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS	66.2 MG	
OMEGA-6 FATTY ACIDS	159 MG	
CARBOHYDRATE	11.4 G	4%
CHOLESTEROL	31.9 MG	11%
IODINE	75 MCG	50%
SUGARS	11.4 G	

MINERALS

CALCIUM	296 MG	30%
IRON	0.1 MG	1%
MAGNESIUM	29.4 MG	7%
PHOSPHORUS	233 MG	23%
POTASSIUM	380 MG	11%
SODIUM	113 MG	5%
ZINC	1.4 MG	10%
COPPER	0.0 MG	1%
MANGANESE	0.0 MG	0%
SELENIUM	5.4 MCG	8%
FLUORIDE	29.4 MCG	

VITAMINS

VITAMIN A	243 IU	5%	NIACIN	0.2 MG	1%
VITAMIN C	1.2 MG	2%	VITAMIN B6	0.1 MG	4%
VITAMIN E	0.1 MG	1%	FOLATE	17.2 MCG	4%
VITAMIN K	0.5 MCG	1%	VITAMIN B12	0.9 MG	15%
THIAMIN	0.1 MG	5%	PANTOTHENIC ACID	1.0 MG	10%
RIBOFLAVIN	0.3 MG	20%	CHOLINE	37.2 MG	

Data courtesy of <http://nutritiondata.self.com/facts/dairy-and-egg-products/104/2> & <http://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/foods/show/105?fg=Dairy+and+Egg+Products&man=&facet=&count=&max=25&sort=&qlookup=+yogurt+&offset=&format=Abridged&new=&measureby=>

YOGURT NUTRIENTS

CALCIUM	30% DV
PHOSPHORUS	23% DV
RIBOFLAVIN	20% DV
VITAMIN B12	15% DV
POTASSIUM	11% DV
ZINC	10% DV
PANTOTHENIC ACID	10% DV

SELENIUM

8% DV

MAGNESIUM

7% DV

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The Best and the Worst Yogurt to Buy

BEST – Raw Yogurt from Sheep or Goat that Are Grass-Fed, Cultured 24 Hours

Did you know that **goat milk** is the closest dairy to human breast milk? It's easier to digest than cow's milk due to the high concentration of medium-chain fatty acids. For individuals who are lactose intolerant, goat's milk contains significantly less.



Sheep milk is the creamiest of all dairy, which is one of the reasons that sheep milk cheese is prized the world over. Sheep's milk yogurt is easy to digest, just like goat milk yogurt; either are great yogurts to get all the health benefits of yogurt.

Also, there are cows that have protein more similar to human milk, and those cows are often called A2 cows. The term A2 refers to a healthier form of casein found in milk whereas A1 casein found in conventional cows may cause similar reactions as people experience who are gluten-intolerant.

When buying or making your own yogurt, you want to look for or make yogurt that is **cultured for 24–29** hours to ensure the highest levels of probiotics and the lowest levels of lactose.



SECOND BEST – Raw Yogurt from Grass-Fed Cows

Raw dairy is rich with probiotics and healthy bacteria, and yogurt made from it starts off ahead of the rest. **Raw milk** is nutrient-dense, helping to increase bone density, build a stronger immune

system, build lean muscle mass and so much more. Through the process of pasteurization, the nutrient profile is dramatically changed. This is why I recommend raw milk, raw cheese and other dairy on my **Healing Foods Diet**.

Instead of heating dairy to 161 to 280 degrees prior to adding probiotics, with raw dairy yogurt, the milk is only heated to 105, and only for a short time. This is just enough heat to activate the healthy bacteria, and the fermentation process, without killing the nutrients that make raw dairy so good for you.

THIRD BEST – Organic Yogurt from Grass-Fed Animals

If you don't have access to raw sheep, goat or cow dairy yogurt, your next choice should be minimally processed organic yogurt from grass-fed animals. As I mentioned above, grass-fed dairy has many nutritional benefits over other dairy, many of which help fight chronic diseases, reduce inflammation and so much more.

Also, if you ferment the dairy for 24–29 hours as recommended as part of the GAPS or SCD diet, it consumes the majority of the lactose and is higher in probiotics.

WORST – Conventional Yogurt, Yes This Includes Greek Yogurt

Not all probiotic yogurt is created equally – and conventional yogurt is not the best choice. The over-processing and added thickeners and preservatives diminish this natural disease-fighting food's nutritional benefits. Greek yogurt is just yogurt that has been strained. If you enjoy a thicker, richer yogurt, you can strain the recommended yogurts above, keeping the whey for smoothies or other preparations.



WORST of the Worst – Sweetened Conventional Yogurts

Many of the yogurts in the dairy case today are little more than over-processed milk, with a ton of added sugar or artificial sweeteners. Avoid these at all costs. If you need to sweeten your yogurt, that's OK – just do it at home with one of the **natural sweeteners** I recommend.



OK for some in Moderation – Non-Dairy Yogurt

Non-dairy yogurts are growing in popularity and are commercially made from almonds, coconut and soy. While the fermenting process is different, these non-dairy yogurts still have the trademark creaminess. These yogurts don't thicken naturally or become creamy when fermented like dairy; thickeners are added to reach the desired texture and consistency.

Thickeners used include arrowroot, tapioca flour, agar, xanthan gum, guar gum, **soy lecithin** and other chemical-ridden thickeners. Additionally, not all non-dairy yogurts contain healthy bacteria; read the label carefully to

make sure that they contain “live active cultures.” Watch for sweeteners in these yogurts; many are highly sweetened and processed.

A Note on Yogurt and Dairy Allergies

Milk allergies are different than a dairy “sensitivity” or intolerance. A true milk allergy can cause anaphylactic shock. A sensitivity to lactose or casein can cause uncomfortable symptoms, but it has rarely become an allergy and acted like a true allergy. Most individuals who are sensitive to dairy products can enjoy real yogurt from goat milk, sheep milk and A2 cow milk.

In fact, a study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that for men with lactose malabsorption, consumption of raw yogurt with live bacteria helped with digestion and increased the butyrate in the system. (13)



How to Make Yogurt

Yes, you can make your own yogurt at home! Doing it at home is cost-effective, and you are in control of every ingredient that goes in. Make rich and creamy yogurt, without unnecessary additives, with whatever dairy milk you desire.



Tools and Ingredients Required:

- **Slow cooker**
- **½ gallon raw, grass-fed milk from cows, sheep or goat***
- **Mesophilic yogurt cultures**
- **Glass jars**
- **Thermometer**
- **2 towels**

*Can substitute pasteurized milk if desired

Note: This is a two-day process

1. First, test the temperature of slow cooker. Add ½ gallon tap water to your slow cooker, and turn on low for 2 ½ hours. Use your food thermometer to check temperature. If the water is above 115 degrees F, it's too high, and it will essentially kill the raw milk's healthy bacteria. If you're not using raw milk, above 115 degrees F is OK.

*If the heat of the water is between 110–115 degrees F, you are free to proceed!

2. Unplug the slow cooker, and allow to cool to room temperature. Dump out the water, and dry. Add the dairy milk (at or near room temperature) of choice, cover with the lid and turn on low. Set a timer for 2 ½ hours. Turn off slow cooker, and unplug it. Do not remove the lid to peek! Allow milk to remain in the slow cooker, lid in place, for 3 hours.

3. Remove 2 cups of the milk to a stainless bowl, and add the starter culture according to the instructions. Mix thoroughly and pour back into the crock, and replace lid.



Immediately wrap the unplugged crock in towels (warmed in the dryer if the room temperature is low), and let set for 18–24 hours undisturbed. This is the culturing period.

4. After 18–24 hours, remove from the slow cooker by filling clean, dry jars. Seal and refrigerate for at least 6–8 hours. While cooling, the yogurt will continue to thicken. Yogurt made from raw dairy will not be as thick as conventionally made yogurt available in the store.

NOTE: If you want a thicker consistency, after the chilling stage, place several layers of cheesecloth in a strainer, over a large bowl. Place yogurt in strainer, and allow to drain overnight in the refrigerator. Don't toss away the whey liquid! It's packed with nutrients, beneficial bacteria and protein. Reserve for other uses.

Yogurt Recipes

Grainless-Granola

Berry Smoothie — Yogurt's creamy texture lends itself to make great smoothies. This recipe includes vanilla extract, **stevia** and raspberries, making it **rich with antioxidants**.

Breakfast Parfait — In the bottom of a glass, place 3 ounces of yogurt. Sprinkle a tablespoon of my **Grainless Granola**; repeat another layer of 3 ounces of yogurt; and top with a handful of fresh **blueberries**, raspberries or blackberries.

Cucumber Raita — A classic accompaniment to Indian foods, raita is a cooling combination of yogurt, garlic and cucumbers. Grate 1 medium cucumber, and squeeze dry. Mix with 2 cups of yogurt, 1 clove of garlic minced and 2 tablespoons of chopped mint leaves. Sprinkle top with a touch of paprika, and chill thoroughly before serving.

Use yogurt in place of mayonnaise (or veganaise) in your favorite salad dressing recipe.

Replace sour cream with yogurt in most recipes; if using as a cream sauce, add just at the end of cooking so as not to “break” the yogurt.

Top your breakfast (or mid-afternoon snack) yogurt with a tablespoon of ground **flaxseeds**. This adds 3 grams of fiber, and more healthy omega-3s!

Healthy Chocolate Pudding — Mix 1 cup of yogurt with raw honey or stevia, and 2 teaspoons of pure cocoa. Mix well ,and refrigerate for 2 hours before enjoying.

Use yogurt to make perfect BBQ chicken! The healthy bacteria help the chicken to retain moisture, and tenderize it at the same time. Mix 1 ½ cups of yogurt, 3 minced garlic cloves, the juice of 1 lemon and 3 tablespoons of olive oil together in a zip lock bag. Add chicken pieces, and allow to marinate in the refrigerator for 3–6 hours. Remove from marinade, and allow to come to room temperature before throwing it on the grill. This *is* the secret to perfectly BBQ’d chicken!

Yogurt Uses

Yes! There are plenty of non-culinary uses for yogurt! Add yogurt to your beauty regimen to experience all the probiotics benefits for your complexion. Your hair and skin will thank you!

Fight Acne with Yogurt – Mix 2 tablespoons of yogurt, 1 tablespoon oats and 1 tablespoon raw honey. Apply over face, paying particular attention to acne-prone areas or breakouts. Leave on 10 minutes, rinse thoroughly with warm water and pat dry.

Moisturize Dry Skin — Mix 1 tablespoon of yogurt with ½ tablespoon of **coconut oil**, and apply to face, elbows or even heels. Relax for 10 minutes, and wipe off with a tissue.

Moisturize Dry Hair – Mix 2 tablespoons of yogurt and 2 tablespoons of coconut oil, and apply to hair. Wrap hair in a towel, and relax for 30 minutes. Rinse thoroughly in the shower, and follow with the **Homemade Honey Citrus Shampoo**. Rinse thoroughly.

Read Next: 8 Greatest Probiotic Foods You Should Be Eating

From the sound of it, you might think leaky gut only affects the digestive system, but in reality it can affect more. Because Leaky Gut is so common, and such an enigma, I'm offering a free webinar on all things leaky gut.

[Click here to learn more about the webinar.](#)